

Quint (A. H.) with regards of
Dr. John H. Mackie

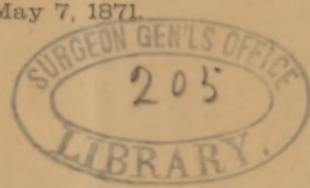
A MEMORIAL

OF

DR. ANDREW MACKIE.

BY REV. A. H. QUINT.

May 7, 1871.



NEW BEDFORD:
EDMUND ANTHONY & SONS, PRINTERS.
1871.

A MEMORIAL

OF

DR. ANDREW MACKIE.

BY REV. A. H. QUINT.

May 7, 1871.



NEW BEDFORD:
EDMUND ANTHONY & SONS, PRINTERS,
1871.

NEW BEDFORD, May 18th, 1871.

DEAR SIR,—At the annual meeting of the Massachusetts Medical Society for the Southern Bristol District, it was voted, in recognition of the high tribute which you had paid the deceased and the medical profession, to ask your permission to publish your sermon upon the death of the late Doctor Andrew Mackie. As a committee chosen for that purpose, we would therefore respectfully request the use of your manuscript for publication.

Very truly yours,

GEORGE ATWOOD, M. D.

GEORGE T. HOUGH, M. D.

HENRY JOHNSON, M. D.

Rev. ALONZO H. QUINT, D. D.

DEAR SIRS,—I consent to the request which your regard for your deceased associate prompted. Of course I do not understand you to indorse any of the theological opinions herein expressed, which Dr. Mackie's official position in the North Congregational Church made inevitable.

Yours truly,

A. H. QUINT.

May 19, 1871.

600.

MEMORIAL SERMON.

"The memory of the just is blessed."—Proverbs, x, 7.

The living book is the interpreter of the written book; unfolded flowers are the interpreters of their science, and bearded grain interprets treatises on seeds and soils. I do not care to make the pulpit the shifting echo of weekly history, but the will of God often recalls the great permanent facts in weekly histories which ought not to be left unnoticed.

You know what I mean. To-day, of those who minister here in the distribution of the bread and wine which our Lord Jesus Christ ordered to be a memorial—till he returns—of his sacrificial death, one was upon the ocean, and another person took his place. That absent one will, if God wills it, return; but another was absent, who will not return. We did not have another person to take *his* place to-day, but left it in its eloquent vacancy. It was better that we should miss that tall and stately form which had walked these aisles nigh forty years, and which, with slower feet and whitened hair, had served at our last distribution of the bread. On this first Lord's Day after his release "to be with Christ, which is far better," he "being dead, yet speaketh."

Rarely speaking particularly of one that is departed, I find it only right and proper to refer to a man who for so many years, faithfully held official position in this church. The memory of the just is blessed. This church is specially rich in its dead. You lived with them, grew with them, toiled with them; and so you do not know those who have died in these last seven years so well as I do; for you saw details of character, I came here a stranger, and saw symmetry of character.

You were accustomed to seeing them, and did not know what they were to a new eye. I saw them in the ripeness of their experience. We never know the real value of those we have always lived with. May be you see defects; a stranger sees the rounded character. Here have been men and women distinguished for strength of character, firm adherence to their Lord, and rich Christian experience. Their memory is a heritage. Their faith is not lost. Character adds strength to a church, which does not vanish when the man vanishes. Every steady Christian adds character to a church. Every good and faithful man, of whatever name of faith, is a valuable possession to a city. Good men are needed for example and influence. All good citizens are sad when a good man is taken away by death. An upright man is worth more to society than a wealthy man. Whoso adds, as every man can, public virtue to the common weal, adds more to its prosperity than he who adds only an accumulating wealth. When another person of this congregation lately died, his high reputation for scrupulous and honorable dealing, — of which this town has always had marked examples—made his death a public loss.

It is little more than seven years since I first met the man, whose death now suggests—no formal discourse, but only some frank and familiar words, in our family. I was here one Sunday, and went away with no thought of returning. But I came back in the summer, and since then I have, of course, known him familiarly. At that time he was next, in seniority of office, to our brother William Lit-

tle, who was even then suffering from the severe disease which, by and by, ended the earthly life of that excellent Christian man. Thus the seniority, and its responsibilities, were practically with Dr. Andrew Mackie, then seventy years old. Firmer in step, but not in Christian faith than later. A face whose massive force an artist would stop to look at. A face of great decision of character, of unconquerable endurance, and apparently an iron will. I heard of his steadfastness, and I was inclined to suppose that I should find him, in the delicate relations of pastor and deacon, possibly difficult to agree with; possibly, by natural characteristics, and long and tried worth, dictatorial. On the contrary, I never found him other than most reasonable, most considerate, most kind. There was never one word between him and his pastor, in these seven years, which I wish had been unsaid. Considering that I came here from a service which was not likely to make a man any less decided than was his natural bent, and a service which perhaps, from the frank, direct and positive methods of such a life tended to make one a little imperious,—I count it a merit and a tact in him, that no ripple ever disturbed our harmony. Some persons have said that he had a severe face. I never saw it severe. I saw one of the gentlest of hearts; impatient of folly, true to convictions of right, but a genial and warm nature, even in trials and difficulties. Genial as a child, even on his deathbed, and considerate for others, in a degree thoroughly unselfish. I have no doubt that in earlier days he was as resolute as a Puritan, in all those works and trials which welded this church; a hard man to fight, when his conscience bid him stand forth; a man who held to his own matured opinions without a shadow of wavering, and perfectly fearless in defense of whatever he thought right. I never found any unreasonable pertinacity. He was not accustomed to revise his settled opinions. Having thoroughly investigated, and become convinced, he labelled a fact as settled, and acted upon it. With a clear mind and a sound judgment, such a course is a wise one; and he had such a mind. Some of his papers are on the files of this church. They are wonderful-

ly clear, direct, and sound, and show a thorough knowledge of the principles he was discussing.

It was some years after his settlement in his profession, and while he had young children, that he entered the service of the Lord Jesus. He united with Christ's church at Plymouth. People said that there was no change in him. But there was a change. It was that change which was the decisive test as to Paul, "Behold, he prayeth!" A moral man, an upright man, a man respected in social and professional life, he had lacked one thing,—a conscious submission to the Lord Jesus Christ. How often is it said of some man, "That man is good enough," when he lacks one thing, loyalty to Jesus. It is loyalty to Christ which makes a Christian. Often a man is a Christian in heart, and only kept from public acknowledgment by a common timidity, may be even by reverence. Would that such men could see that the church is Christ's house, and He bids them come in. How much better this man's life was, how much more useful he was, because of his public confession of Christ in his early manhood! But *he* felt that he had never been a Christian. He became a praying man, and henceforward served his Master, whether it was easy or hard, and though it cost time, money, and self-denial. He carried his natural characteristics into Christ's service, which is just what Christ expects every man to do. A strong will is all the better for being strong, when tempered by Christ's love. Decision and firmness are all the better, to make decided and firm Christians. That faith which he received, in doctrine, he never wavered from. He took Christ's teaching, the great old faith of the Church Catholic. I do not believe that the novelties of later days ever disturbed him for a moment. Why not? Because he was rooted and grounded in intelligent faith. Confidence does not consist in seeing how to answer every error, but in knowing the reality of truth. Many a believer cannot answer novelties, and that is of no consequence. It is not what we do not know, that governs us; it is what we do know. And what we do know, of religion, makes its strength. The positive faith of the Christian church is its impregnable strength.

A Christian experience is an impregnable position, because the believer *knows* Christ's power and work. He *knows* that God, for Christ's sake, forgave his sins, because he has the witness in his own heart; and it makes not a dent in his faith, that somebody else hurls at him the assertion that *his* sins are not forgiven. Christian beliefs are simply the personal knowledge of Christian facts. But our good old friend not only had a positive faith; he knew its foundation, by careful study. Error never disturbed him. He never feared for the truth, because he knew its origin and power.

It will be thirty-seven years next month, since he took office in this church. He was chosen, on the death of William W. Kempton, of honored memory. Cornelius Burgess, one of the founders of this church, was then in office, and so remained; and these two cover the entire history of this church, from 1807 to last Tuesday. [He died May 2.] Of those who have died since I came here, there were members when he took office, — Henry P. Willis, Ivory H. Bartlett, George Clark, Southward Potter, Elisha Parker, William Little, Richard Davenport, with godly women not a few. Many are the dead; and yet, of those then members, more than fifty still remain with us. It is a blessing, that God spares to the church the Christians of ripe experience and mature piety.

Some persons have thought that the office of deacon ought to be limited to a few years' tenure. No. We want something stable in these days. The church needs the steady care of men permanent, for the pastorate is a very uncertain office. Our friend came into office in the time of its first pastor, and he had seen five other pastors when he died. The church needs men to bear its interests on their hearts and in their prayers, who know it by long experience, and are qualified to advise a pastor; a pastor often younger, and who, if he will not value the judgment of such men of age and knowledge, is unfit for the weighty care of a Christian church.

When it seemed needful, four years ago, to add to the number of deacons,—for one had died, and others had served long,—he told me that the older deacons better re-

sign, and give place to younger men. His suggestion never came before the church. If it had, the church would have said what I said: "No. We will add enough to help bear all the burdens, but the old men must stay in office to the last moment of their lives." You know what Lincoln said: "I can make a general, but I cannot make a soldier." You know what a king said: "I can make a peer, but I cannot make a painter." So it is, that we can make officials, but they have to grow, by long years, into the mellow experience which makes the counsel of wise old men to be of untold value, and their example to be of unmeasured worth. I always loved to see that man on communion day, ministering to Christ's people; with faith unclouded, with mind undimmed, though grown feebler in his still erect form. "His presence," said one to me, "is a benediction."

Often have "deacons" been made terrible in imagination, as "troublesome." I do not know why. The office is one of great value. Its incumbents can do great good. And what I say as to this man, I can say in an experience with two churches, that I have never yet found one with whom I have ever had the least trouble; only such as have been courteous and kind Christian helpers.

A man is valuable who is strictly conscientious. Men may easily differ in their estimates of things, and be perfectly honest. Measures are variable. We cannot always see alike as to their desirableness. Some persons are naturally conservative; others are radical. He was conservative, and yet not ~~extremely~~ so. But he was very decided. I suppose that he and some of you have differed in judgment, and from what I know of both, I am quite sure you were both very strenuous. Decided people are apt to be so. When anything required nerve, he was always ready for duty. But you all agree that he never did anything which his conscience did not dictate. And he had the merit of never holding grudges, or thinking that one who differed, was therefore blameworthy. We have the memory of a man scrupulous to know the right, and perfectly fearless to do it, at any cost. In his life of seventy-seven years, he left the testimony of an honest and conscientious man. A strong man he was, strong in

his convictions. I have always thought he reproduced the Puritan idea, modified only to less sternness. A massive strength, a solid faith, a fearless utterance; and though genial, and especially so in his family, where I know he considered everybody's comfort before his own—yet a character which if roused to wrath, one would dread to encounter. Such men are capable of great severity. It is now the habit to disparage the old Puritans, by contrast with the milder Plymouth people. I do not accept it. The Puritans made this country. It is strength that carries great things, not softness. The Puritan came in conflict with dangers, and he subdued them; often too roughly, but mightily. The Puritan came to the wilderness for quiet. He had a right to his own house. When meddlers came, he swept them away, rightly, if he chose. I wish he had done it with less roughness, but if he had not done it at all, this would never have been Massachusetts.

I turn to different thoughts. Professional life suggests them.

Born in Wareham, January 24, 1794, he was son and grandson of physicians, each successful. His father, Dr. Andrew Mackie, of Wareham, was a leading practitioner in eastern Massachusetts; his grandfather, Dr. John Mackie, of Southampton, L. I. The son was fitted for college under the care of Rev. Noble Everett, of Wareham; graduated at Brown University in 1813; studied medicine with his father and elder brother (Dr. John Mackie, of Providence, R. I.) and at the College of Physicians and Surgeons in New York, and commenced practice fifty-four years ago, in Plymouth; and there and here was his professional life passed—though for some years past he had greatly retired from practice. That he stood well in the respect of his associates, is in the fact that he was twice Vice President of the Massachusetts Medical Society, and gave, by election, its annual address in 1850. He kept up his reading of current medical literature to the last; but I presume that he had seen so many glittering specialties come and go, that, though not rejecting, he was jealous of mere novelties. His care of some of you—you have told me of it—made his face pleasant to you from childhood, and his judgment valuable as you grew up.

But I refer to his profession particularly because of the opportunity it gives me to speak regarding that profession. I think I have had somewhat rare opportunities to know its worth. My own ordinary work has necessarily led me to see what it does, and I have been where the lives of multitudes were at stake on medical or surgical faithfulness and skill. Some people think of it only as a necessary profession, a mere way of getting a livelihood. It is something far different. It requires scientific study, long and constantly continued. It requires the acutest attention and consideration. It requires patient watching and discrimination. It can neglect nothing, despise nothing. True success requires mental abilities of a high order. As a mere employment, nobody can succeed in it. As a scientific profession, ministering to the good of men, it is above an employment. It has its code of professional honor, as strict as that of a soldier. One rule illustrates this: that no physician who has discovered a valuable remedy shall keep its preparation secret, and make merchandise of it, though it might bring him great wealth; but what he finds will alleviate the woes of sickness, he shall honorably and unselfishly let the world know. There is no room in this profession for anything but the most honest and honorable principle.

And yet I doubt if there is any work in life which is so often underestimated and slighted as that of real medical service. Men of fine natural powers, who have given years of profound study to books and cases, and who are well and thoroughly skilled, and who would not deceive for all the world, are often passed by, when some pretentious braggart, an entire stranger, comes for a few days, puffs himself like a quack, and parades certificates of unknown cures. The traveling speculator in life has rooms thronged by deluded patients, and goes away with much spoil, leaving victims who will be just as foolish at the next opportunity of folly. With such foolish ones, study, experience, and skill, and every motive which could make a physician improve himself, are nothing in comparison with the mystical charm of a "seventh son of a seventh son."

The good physician is of inestimable value. When your child is sick, you turn to *him*, with anxious trust. If his ready knowledge tells you

that there is no danger, *that* is worth appreciating ; the relief of anxiety, by a competent man, is a boon. But often we are absolutely dependent on his skill, under God, and he is God's instrument. Wonderfully dear interests are put into his hands. The angels of life and death are hovering, and you are tearfully anxious. You have no other human helper. You watch his look, and dwell upon his simplest words. His skill and care money cannot buy. There is not an honorable physician anywhere, whose carefulness is governed by fee or reward. He makes a case his own, calmly and quietly ; studies it, acts upon it. To relieve pain, to remove anxiety, to save limb or life, is his great absorbing desire. It is a ministry of doing good, not only to the body, but to the soul. Mental states are often under his care, and reason itself depends on his watchfulness.

It is a self-denying work. You and I have our nights' sleep ; he is subject to call night and day. He is broken of rest, sometimes for days. You would think it very hard if he did not answer a midnight's often needless summons. He has to face driving storms, bear fierce cold, suffer under tropical heat. A large part of his expenditure of time and skill is absolutely without fee ; for the ethics of its practice demand that no sufferer, however poor, shall lack the skill which he needs. The physician's work requires that no pestilence shall deter him, no contagion shall frighten him. When the cholera was in New York, years ago, this city sent our lamented friend to that place, to study the disease and thus be qualified to meet it. Like a true physician, he went into the infected air, and risked his life in duty. The number of those who have fallen martyrs to their self-devotion, is not slight ; as true martyrs for the good of others, as any who ever risked their lives on the field of battle, and without the stimulus of the roar of guns and the rattle of musketry.

You see what a faithful man may be in this profession. Earnest, devoted, self-sacrificing. He becomes a trusted family friend, a confidential adviser. He deserves it. And you see what gratitude is due to honorable men in it. One so trusted *may* be dishonorable ; but that such a case is so rare, is evidence that these men are highminded men.

I believe, naturally, that there is no work like that of the ministry which preaches "Christ and Him crucified." But next to it, often parallel with it, is that twin art which prolongs and preserves human life, and ministers to the soul through that body which is its temple. And I only remind you that the fidelity of the skilful physician is something which deserves your high respect and your appreciative gratitude.

In such a work, our brother was engaged all his life, without reproach. I have been told by his associates, that they never knew him, in his intercourse with his brethren or in practice, to violate, in the least degree, what a sensitive honor required. Honest, tried, trusted in not a few homes, he was a wise friend, a beloved physician.

Time passes on, and we pass on with it. There comes a time when skill is no defence. The vital power gets exhausted. Yet it is a blessing to live to a ripe old age. It completes life. "Because he hath set his love upon me," said God, "therefore will I deliver him. I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. He shall call upon me, and I will answer him. I will be with him in trouble ; I will deliver him and honor him. With long life will I satisfy him and show him my salvation." This was fulfilled in this life. He was satisfied with long life. In troubles, for he had them, God was with him, and bore the troubles cheerfully and uncomplainingly. He saw his family long settled, his sons in useful professions. He had the respect of his fellow citizens as a just man, and the regard of those in his own work, to some of whom he was a patriarch.

With all this, he had faith in Christ, from which came the hope that "entereth into that within the veil." Fifty years of consistent Christian life are his testimony. Not long since a younger Christian, one of that bustling class which likes to meddle with men's souls, with more zeal than wisdom, reminded him that he was getting old, and asked him if it was not time to be preparing for death ! Asked him, who could have taught the young man more than he had ever dreamed of ! The good old man only replied that his preparation had been making many years. We used to listen to him in prayer-meetings ;

I do not think that I ever heard him when he did not say "duty." Duty fulfilled is preparation. It does take years to make such a preparation. Fruit does not ripen in blossom time. A great oak is many years from the acorn. A good life, stalwart, vigorous, true, it takes years to build it up. It begins with Christian birth, but patient continuance in well doing is the secret of a right life. Be patient, young men! Character is a plant of slow growth. But the reward of patient continuance is certain.

When he came to his last days, he had no fear. Calmly and peacefully he spent his remaining time, and went home to God, and we shall see his face no more.

But let me quote what he once said, drawn from his long experience: "I have seen many cases of supposed repentance on what

appeared to be deathbeds. But I never knew a case where that repentance lasted if the sick man recovered." He did not say there are no such true repents; but in fifty years of life, he never saw such a case. If he had lived only to say this, and to let it be quoted as the testimony of an upright, a God-fearing physician, who knew both the body and the soul; to have it quoted in the hope that this warning might prevent some from the sad mistake of substituting an expected repentance at the border of the grave, in place of a true and manly life, for which I do now quote it; quoting it as from the dead lips you will never hear speak again, and from that beloved and revered man whom you will never see again; if he had lived only to be able to give this weighty testimony, he would not have lived in vain.

•••

At the annual meeting of the South Bristol Medical Society, held in New Bedford, May 10th, 1871, the following resolutions were adopted:

Resolved, That by the death of Dr. Andrew Mackie, of New Bedford, the members of this society lose an associate of marked professional ability and uprightness of character.

Resolved, That, one of the founders of our society, he has claims to our gratitude for his unvarying support of it—a support given from an often expressed conviction of the correctness of the principle underlying its organization, that by measures promotive of professional good, that of our fellow-men will be promoted.

Resolved, That as individuals, our gratitude is due him for the example of steadfast devotion to duty, and high moral principle, which has governed his course; that, as a man, a friend, and a physician, his memory will ever be precious.

Resolved, That we tender our sincere sympathy to his widow and his children in their bereavement.

